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CIA / SAVA / WVIND 700131



WEEKLY VIETNAM INDICATORS

Week Ending 31 January 1970

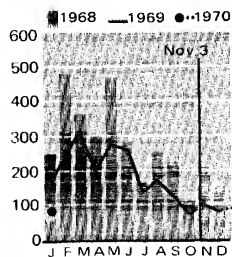
NSA Declassification/Release Instructions on File.

For the President Only

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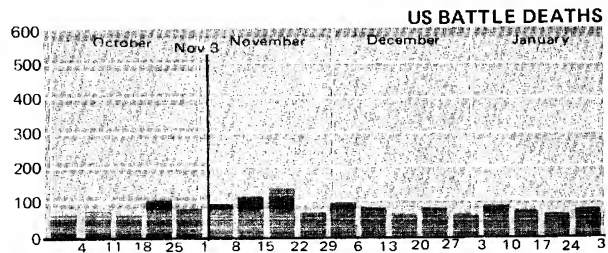
SOUTH VIETNAM WEEKLY INDICATORS

1968-1970

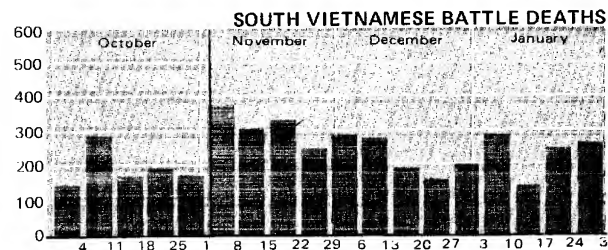
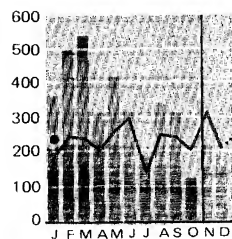
weekly average
for each month

OCTOBER 1969 - JANUARY 1970

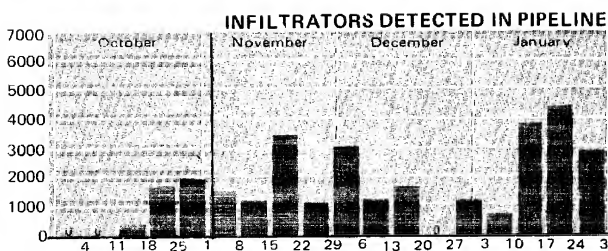
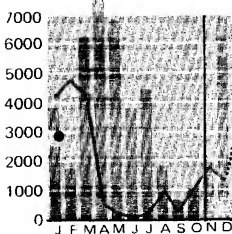
weekly data as reported



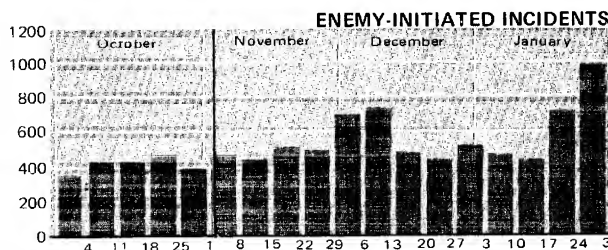
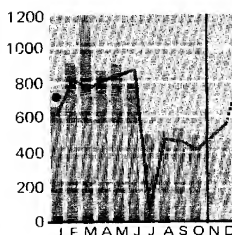
US BATTLE DEATHS rose slightly this week to 85 from last week's 79.



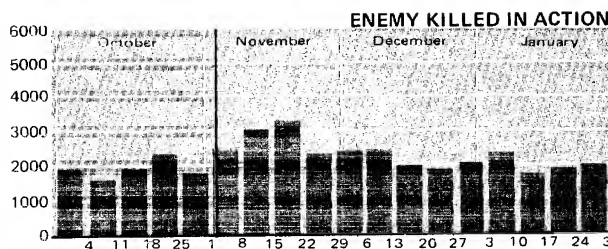
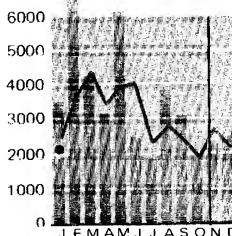
SOUTH VIETNAMESE BATTLE DEATHS increased to 264 from last week's 246. The official total will change as late reports are received and will probably be lower than the figures released to the press by the GVN for these periods.



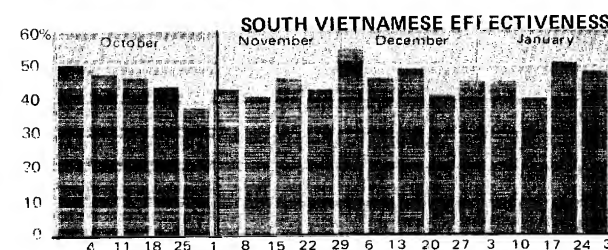
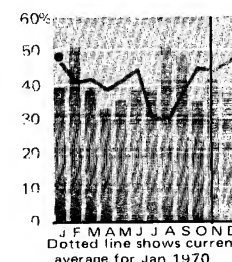
INFILTRATORS DETECTED IN PIPELINE for this week total 2,930. Five battalion-size groups were observed in the pipeline, but four of these had already been accepted into the estimate as "gap fill" groups. The total pipeline input since 23 October 1969 stands at some 33,900 to 34,900.



ENEMY-INITIATED INCIDENTS rose this week to 989 from last week's 733. The increase includes part of a brief surge on the night of 31 January (our week under review cut off at midnight on 31 January). This week's increase also reflects a general rise in small-scale harrasing action, which have come to constitute the bulk of the enemy's activity.



ENEMY KILLED IN ACTION increased from last week's 1,942 to this week's 2,029.



SOUTH VIETNAMESE EFFECTIVENESS as measured by the percentage of enemy killed by RVN forces decreased from 51% last week to 49% for this week.

Statistics for the latest week shown are preliminary

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

Enemy Activity

The enemy continued to pick up the pace of his activity against Allied installations and the GVN's pacification effort this week. The close of the week witnessed a surge of activity in I and II Corps. The bulk of the enemy's countrywide effort continued to be devoted to low-level harassing activities, which are the work of his local force units and are not spectacularly costly to him in terms of manpower. As has been the case for several months, enemy main force units are still drawn well back into relatively secure base areas or safely positioned in the Cambodian sanctuary. In I Corps, one regiment of the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) 324B Division positioned east of the A Shau Valley may foreshadow an enemy thrust toward Hue. In western IV Corps, the threat to Chau Doc City has been alleviated somewhat by the repositioning of the NVA 101D and 18B Regiments; though the most recent arrival to the area, the NVA 95th Regiment, still threatens this provincial capital.

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██████████ ralliers, and prisoners continued to speak of a future offensive. Although the situation is anything but clear, it now appears that the enemy will not strike in force prior to or during Tet. ██████████ the holiday period, at least in the III Corps area, will be used as a period to reposition units and emplace supplies. ██████████ no general attack order has yet been passed by COSVN, and that the enemy effort in III Corps will be to divert Allied attention away from the main arena -- IV Corps. Although the central highlands are rated as a "strategic objective" as is the Mekong Delta region, the enemy does not, at this time, appear to have the military assets needed to undertake ambitious operations in the highlands.

Enemy Infiltration

There was a sharp decline in the number of infiltrators this week as compared to the previous two weeks. Although some 3,000 personnel moving in five battalion-size groups were observed, only 1,100 were added to the count since four of the five groups had been previously accepted as "gap fills" and already included in the estimate. Four of the groups were of the 2,100 series, indicating COSVN as a final destination. (The COSVN area of jurisdiction includes IV Corps.) The total for January now stands at 27 groups detected and five groups accepted at "gap fills," with a combined strength of about 15,000. Of the January total, over 60 percent are destined for COSVN as compared to about 46 percent for 1969, indicating the enemy's increasing interest in that area. Infiltrators destined for COSVN could, of course, be used as fillers for units in either III Corps or IV Corps.

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Since 23 October, an estimated 33,900 to 34,900 have entered the infiltration pipeline. This range includes 42 groups detected in NVN, 21 detected in Laos and eight gap fill groups. The upper range of the spread includes one additional gap group, five "blocs" totaling 154 and 300 southward moving unidentified personnel.

South Vietnam Developments

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The GVN leadership in Saigon is apparently taking an increasingly detached view of the Paris talks, which Saigon's leaders have never regarded with any great measure of enthusiasm or expectation. ██████████

██████████ key South Vietnamese officials feel that the GVN is "winning the war" and that nothing should be done at Paris to permit the Communists to extricate themselves from this predicament. The GVN does

not intend to withdraw from the talks, but has already decided to reduce the size of its staff in Paris. This decision is based in part on the generally hostile feeling toward the talks, and in part on budgetary considerations. Because of Saigon's

[REDACTED]

President Thieu's recent shake-up of division commanders in the delta appears to be paying off. Preliminary reports indicate that the new commander of the 7th ARVN Division, Colonel Nguyen Khoa Nam, is living up to his reputation as an aggressive, effective officer. In contrast to his predecessor, who preferred to remain at division headquarters in the province capital, Nam has established his command post in the field, and is constantly supervising his unit in operations. The 7th Division units, reportedly, are now remaining in the field and operate at night instead of returning to their bases each evening. The 7th may soon be tested -- reports suggest that the NVA 88th Regiment may be preparing to move into the populated areas of the upper delta with My Tho city a possible objective.

Communist Developments

The purpose of Le Duc Tho's return to Paris after a six month absence remains unclear, though attendance at the French Communist Party Congress, which ends on 8 February, is almost certainly not the sole reason for Tho's return; and Tho has told [REDACTED] that he would not leave Paris immediately following the Congress. The recent praise by Hanoi for the March 1946 compromise agreement with the French, which enabled the Viet Minh to effect the withdrawal of the Chinese Nationalist occupation troops and to gain time for military preparations, raises the possibility of a new Communist initiative at the talks aimed at encouraging U.S. withdrawal. At this stage, however, we are more inclined to think that the Communists hope to reverse the image of inflexibility that Tho's absence has helped generate, and also to put pressure on our side to name a high level successor to Ambassador Lodge. Tho's return to France (a low cost gesture involving of itself no substantive concessions) might spark European and American opponents of the Vietnam war to urge the U.S. Government to make some forthcoming concession or reciprocal gesture to get the talks off dead center.

Other Major Developments

The high rate of logistics activity in the Laotian Panhandle, which started in December, will apparently continue in February. A second phase of what the Communists are now themselves referring to as a "crash program apparently started on 30 January. Recent shipments include unusually large quantities of munitions, with one unit reporting receipt of nearly 400 tons of the Soviet-made 122mm rockets in a three-week period. This quantity represents approximately a one-year supply at last year's dry season expenditure rate. Ammunition losses from airstrikes in the Panhandle and from Allied captures were in 1969 then in 1968, and there probably has been a need to replenish stocks, but the quantities involved also suggest urgent preparations for at least expanded harassment activity in South Vietnam.

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